(c) The growth in agiiculture in recent years has been generally satisfactory except during 1997-98 when it declined due to unfavourable climatic conditions over time in different parts of the country.

Non-official members in CVC

*268. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHAVJI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision has been taken to appoint non-official members in the Central Vigilance Commission;

(b) if so, what qualifications have been laid down for the purpose;

(c) whether appointment of any non-official has been made; and

(d) if so, the details of the non-officials appointed so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) and (b) Sub-section (3) of Section 3 of the Central Vigilance Commission Ordinance, 1998 (No. 15 of 1998) dated 25th August, 1998 as amended by the Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Ordinance, 1998 (No. 18 of 1998) dated 27th October, 1998 provides that the Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Vigilance Commissioners shall be appointed from amongst persons:—

"(3) (a) who have been or are in an all-India service or in any civil service of the Union or in a civil post under the Union having knowledge and experience in the matters relating to vigilance, policy making and administration including police administration; and

(b) who have held office or are holding office in a corporation established by or under any Central Act or a Government company owned or controlled by the Central Government and persons who have expertise and experience in finance including insurance and banking, law, vigilance and investigations:

Provided that, from amongst the Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Vigilance Commissioners, not more than three persons shall belong to the category of persons referred to either in clause (a) or in clause (b)".

(c) and (d) In terms of Clause 4 of the Central Vigilance Commission Ordinance, 1998 dated 25th August, 1998, the new Central Vigilance Commissioner who meets the eligibility criteria mentioned above has so far been appointed by the Central Government after following the procedure laid down therein.

Resolution at UN for Reducing Nuclear Danger

*269. DR. KARAN SINGH:
PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India had introduced a resolution in the UN General Assembly in the first week of November this year on "reducing nuclear danger";

(b) if so, the details of the resolution; and

(c) response of the different nuclear powers thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At India's initiative a new resolution was introduced in the UN General Assembly in November this year. The resolution recalls that the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to mankind. The hair trigger alert status of nuclear weapons, maintained by some countries, carries unacceptable risks of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons. The resolution further calls upon the five Nuclear-

Weapon States to review their nuclear doctrines and to take immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nulcear weapons. The resolution urges Member States to take necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in all its aspects, and to promote nuclear disarmament, with the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons.

(c) US, France, UK and Russia voted against while China abstained in the resolution.

Pending Disciplinary Cases

*270. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2S8S given in the Rajya Sabha on 14th August, 1997, and state;

(a) disciplinary cases pending in the Ministry (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances) and since when;

(b) whether there is any instruction of the Cabinet Secretariat for early completion of cases and preferably within one year,

(c) whether the instructions are being followed; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) There is one disciplinary case pending in the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. The proceedings in the said case were started on 18.10.96 with the issue of chargesheet on that date. However, the order dated 18.10.96 by which the chargesheet was originally issued was withdrawn on 1.4.97 and a revised chargesheet issued on the same date to make one of the charges more explicit and to issue it under the signature of the competent disciplinary authority. The order dated 18.10.96 by which the chargesheet was communicated to the charged officer was signed by a non-competent authority and as such it was void *ab initio.* The inquiry in the case by the Inquiring Authority is in progress.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The charged official has been representing time and again, questioning the validity of the procedings, on one ground or the other. The points raised by him in these representations had to be examined by the disciplinary authority and position clarified to the Inquiring Authority. In these circumstances, it has not been possible for the Inquiring Authority to proceed with the inquiry, pending suitable clarifications on the points raised by the charged official. The points raised by the charged official in his representation dated 31.8.98 were examined by the disciplinary authority and position clarified to the Inquiring Authority only in the first week of October, 1998. With a view to finishing the inquiry in one go, the Inquiring Authority had fixed four consecutive hearings starting from 7th December, 1998. However, he could not proceed with the hearings as the Defence Assistant of the charged official was not spared by his Department due to his pre-occupations with Parliamentary work.

Agro-Based Vocational Training for Women in Kerala

*271. SHRI *J.* CHITHARANJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kerala Government has submitted a project for agro-based vocational training for women with the objective of imparting training to the farm women of Kerala in the latest technologies of agriculture and allied subject with a view to improve their social and economic standards through their effective participation in farm operations; and

(b) if so, the details of the project and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal received from the Kerala State Government entitled "Programme for Agro-Based Vocational Training for Women" envisages

. (i) Agro-based vocational training for farm women at an estimated cost of Rs. 17.62 crores, covering 14 districts.